



Neighborhood Preparedness News

February 1999

Newsletter for Clark County CERT

Vol. 2, Number

Landslides

Landslides are not the first thing that most CERT members think about when imagining what sort of a disaster they might encounter. But in this area, with soil types of varying stability, housing construction on slopes, and the typical Northwest rainy fall, winter, and spring, CERTs might want to keep this type of disaster more in mind.

The Kelso slide, now infamous, is an example of a landslide in slow motion. Landslides can occur very rapidly, however, and devastate everything in their path. In fact, a person on foot may very well be unable to outrun a slide. A person attempting to escape a slide by car may find themselves, their vehicle, and the entire roadway becoming part of the massive slide, carried away in an avalanche of mud. Even complete structures can be swept away, as the picture below illustrates.

Warning Signs:

Watch for structural changes: doors jamming for the first time, or the appearance of cracks. Outside, look at a slope base for bulging ground, or for fences and trees tilting. During a slide you can hear a faint rumbling sound that increases in volume as the landslide nears. The ground slopes down in one specific direction and may begin shifting in that direction under your feet. **(continued on pg. 4)**

Landslide (continued from page 1)

DID YOU KNOW...

The most expensive landslide in US history occurred in Thistle, Utah, in spring, 1983. It was 1 1/2 miles from top to bottom and ranged in width from 1,000 feet to about 1 mile. Total costs attributable to the landslide exceeded \$500 million.



Homes destroyed in mudslide in Rio Rico, AZ.

Want more? Check out the FEMA web site www.fema.gov or try <http://landslides.usgs.gov>

Hypothermia

Hypothermia must be a consideration when triaging and treating patients in a post-disaster setting during cold weather. Guest contributor Mary Lou Hadwick offers some special insight into this medical complication. -DN

Normally, your body functions best at a temperature of 98.6 °F (37°C). As the body temperature approaches 95° , hypothermia sets in and the body starts closing down unnecessary functions. Initial signs are peripheral vasoconstriction (blood vessels in the extremities constrict), an increase in heart output and respiratory rate. The body responds by shivering and increasing body metabolism, but with a further decrease in body temperature.

Hypothermia happens from exposure to cold air or water or from inadequate food combined with less than adequate clothing. Hypothermia is accelerated in windy environments.

♦ MODERATE HYPOTHERMIA

The core temperature is 94-86°F. Shivering is aggressive, heart rate decreases, movements & reactions are slowed, respiration decreases.

♦ SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA

When the temperature falls below 86°F the person loses the ability to speak, producing only incoherent sounds, and may fail to use good common judgement. As hypothermia progresses, the patient becomes unconscious. Clinical death by ventricular fibrillation (rapid, inefficient heart contractions or twitching) is the eventual result.

ELDERLY AT RISK!

Chronic hypothermia results from long exposures to cold environments. Children and the elderly are especially at risk. These folks will move even slower and may not be fully conscious if their core temperature is below 95°F. They need careful explanations, patience, and help with doing normal things.

FIRST AID FOR HYPOTHERMIA

If the patient is on the ground, protect from heat loss with blankets underneath. Remove all cold, wet clothing carefully, being careful not to jostle the victim. Excessive movement sends cold, acidotic blood from the extremities directly to the heart, which may cause cardiac arrest. You may choose to cut the clothes off to prevent further jostling.

(continued on page 4)

Hypothermia (continued from page 1)

Wrap the victim in a blanket or sleeping bag covering all

FROM THE EDITOR:

Your suggestions, articles, and photos for the newsletter are welcomed. Please submit your ideas before 4/30/99 to:

Deborah Needham,
CERT Coordinator
710 W. 13th Street
Vancouver, WA
98660-2810
deborah.
needham@co.clark.
wa.us

QUESTIONS? Call someone!

Clark County
CERT Coordinator
Deborah Needham
737-1911 X3962

Clark County
Emergency
Preparedness
John Wheeler
737-1911 X3941

Battle Ground/
Fire District #11
Dean Lange
687-2233

Camas/Washougal/
East County:
Gary Horst
834-2262
Krista Stevenson
834-5307

Hazel Dell/Felida/
Salmon Creek/
Fire District #6
Chris Orman
576-1195

North Country EMS/
Yacolt Fire Dept.
Jim Langborg
686-3271

Vancouver Fire
Department
Rick Sanders
696-8166

Classes For New CERT Members

IN PROGRESS:

February 11 - March 25 Thursdays, 7:00 - 9:30 pm. Camas Fire/ Camas Police/Camas Parks and Recreation. Final Drill 9 am, March 27. Call Krista Stevenson, 834-5307.

February 24 - April 7 Wednesdays, 7:00-9:30 pm. Fire District #6. Final Drill 9 am, April 10. Call Chris Orman, 576-1195.

COMING UP SOON:

April 5 - May 10 Mondays, 7:00-9:30, Fire Districts #11/ #3. Final Drill 9 am, May 15. Call Dean Lange, 687-2233.

April 6- May 20 Tuesdays, 7:00 - 9:30 pm. Final Drill 9 am, May 22. Vancouver Fire Dept./Clark Regional Communications Agency. Call Deborah Needham, 737-1911, Ext. 3962.

TBA North Country EMS/Yacolt Fire Department. Call Jim Langborg, 686-3271

PLANNING AHEAD:

September 7 - October 26 Tues. 7:00 - 9:30 pm. Final Drill 9 am, November 6. VFD/CRCA. Call Deborah Needham.

September 8 - October 27 Wed. 7:00-9:30 pm. Final Drill 9 am, October 30. FD#6. Call Chris Orman 576-1195

September TBA Camas FD/Parks & Recreation. Call Krista Stevenson, 834-5307

September TBA FD#11/#3. Call Dean Lange, 687-2233.

CERT Courses require attendance at all sessions. If you miss a class in your scheduled course, you need to make up the training by attending applicable refresher trainings, or by attending the corresponding session in another series if the instructor approves it. Please contact your course coordinator to make sure your make-up training meets requirements for course completion. -DN



Refresher Training

April

4/24 Disaster Drill, 9 am Location TBA Call Dean Lange, 687-2233.

June

6/24 Team Operations, 7 pm, 505 SW 1st Street, BattleGround, Station 11-3. Call Dean Lange.

More 1999 Training with Fire District #11

Aug 28 Disaster Drill

Oct 28 ATC 20/Search and Rescue

Dec 18 Disaster Drill

NOTE: As with all trainings, class dates and times are subject to change on occasion. Confirm in advance if you plan to attend.

Interview with Lynn Poteet

Lynn has been a Clark County resident since 1973, and an active member of the North Country CERT since Winter, 1996. She and her husband operate a small business within Clark County, but she still finds time to take her CERT role seriously. She has participated in many local drills with North Country and District 11 CERTs, and more recently the Northwest Emergency Response Team Rodeo in Portland. Deborah Needham interviewed her about her participation in this first regional event.

Lynn, you've been involved in CERT for a while now, and you've taken a lot of initiative to keep up your skills. What was it that drew you to CERT in the first place? It's something we'd do anyway. We've always looked after ourselves first after an event, but then we're out there looking after our neighbors, to make sure they're okay, like after a seven-day snowstorm or something. It's great to have the training and the networking of CERT to really make a difference.

You were at the Northwest Emergency Response Team Rodeo on October 24th. You went through the exercises as part of a team. Was this your own CERT group? No. We were completely split into different groups. There were people from Portland, Hillsboro, Vancouver...all over. They all have different names. We're CERTs, and I guess there are NERTs and NETs too, but we're all supposed to be using the same training.

How did that work, being with team members you didn't know? Well, it was good, because you can always get new perspectives. But it led to some semantic problems. Mostly I remember disagreements about whether a person should be classed as immediate, delayed or dead. We need to stick to the same criterion and terminology.

Interview (continued from page 2)

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CERT Leadership

John Wheeler has accepted expanded duties in the Emergency Preparedness Department. Deborah Needham will be taking more leadership in the CERT Program in the future.

In November, the Clark County CERT Steering Committee was formed to provide direction to the County's CERT program. Elections held in November provided the Steering Committee with interim leadership. In addition to the general voting membership, the executive committee is currently comprised of:

Pat Cooley	Chair
Chet Coleman	Vice-Chair
Chris Garboden	Secretary
Mona Ail	Financial Advisor
Deborah Needham	Program Coordinator

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at CRCA, at 710 W. 13th Street, from 7:00-8:30 pm. The Committee meets next on **March 16th**. Current projects include a CERT survey, database update, a training plan for CERTs, and continued outreach and recruitment in the community. If you are interested in distributing the CERT brochure to recruit new members, please contact Deborah Needham for supplies. -DN



First Aid / CPR

You can register for classes by calling the American Red Cross Clark County Chapter at 693-5821.

Dear Preparedness Pete....

Dear Pete:

I live in a rural section of the county. I know that CERTs have to be most concerned with the safety of people first, but what special considerations need to be given to livestock after a disaster?



(Special thanks to Brenda Finn for this question.)

Just like you, animals may become confused by a disaster. Horses, for instance will run into a burning stable when frightened. Stable doors should be closed securely to prevent them from doing that.

As a livestock owner, you can prepare a disaster plan for your animals which includes phone numbers of services or agencies that might assist you in managing your livestock emergencies in a crisis.

food, water, veterinary care, etc. Accustom animals in advance to trailers so they will be less frightened in an emergency transport.

- ◆ If animals cannot be transported, remember their needs for food, water, and shelter. Store plenty of food and water advance, as initial relief efforts after the event may not be adequate to meet your livestock's needs.

For additional information

The Humane Society
Disaster Services Program
2100 L. Street NW
Washington, DC 20037
(202)452-1100

-DN

- ◆ Evacuate your livestock whenever possible. Plan ahead, including alternate routes and host sites. And make sure the evacuation site will be able to readily obtain

Did it teach you anything about team organization, being thrown together like that?

Well, hindsight is always a great teacher. I learned a lot about team psychology. When it comes to leadership, you'll need to speak up. But how do you carefully and diplomatically speak up and take leadership without stepping on toes? I also saw how important the leadership was to success. Without strong leadership, it is difficult to accomplish the objectives.

What kind of skills did you practice? How was it set up? There were all kinds of stations: canine search demonstration, fire suppression, knot-tying, medical triage, splinting and bandaging, search and rescue, with practice cribbing, and also segments on chain-saw safety and survival hygiene. We did everything we were trained to do, and then had the benefit of seeing extra things, too. The firefighters and instructors were excellent teachers and the time spent in the drills made it much more real.

Were there any stations that really stood out to you? The medical was kind of frustrating because of complexity, and disagreements about delayed vs. immediate, etc. The volunteer victims were terrific, though. There's a huge psychological component to the realism. That's why debriefing is so important afterwards. Certainly the most exciting part of the drill was searching the dark, enclosed debris-filled building. Of course, that's probably the most dangerous for the CERTs, but it really keeps you on your toes.

From your perspective, how important is this type of event? Very important, and it should definitely be an annual event if we're serious about being prepared. It was very well-run, and highly organized with little prizes, T-shirts and everything. It confirms the value of drills. If you're serious about being helpful, *practice, practice, practice!* You can never be ready enough.

And would you do it again? Definitely! I think it was the best ten dollars I spent all year. -DN

Survival Tips:

Inside a building: Stay inside. Take cover under a desk, table, or other piece of sturdy furniture.

If outdoors: Try to get out of the path of the landslide or mudflow. Run to the nearest high ground in a direction away from the path. If rocks and other debris are approaching, run for the nearest shelter such as a group of trees or a building. If escape is not possible, curl into a tight ball and protect your head.

CERT Response:

- ◆ **Evacuate:** Have at least two evacuation routes since roads may become blocked or closed.
- ◆ **Emergency Communication:** Family members and team members may be separated. Have a plan!
- ◆ **Search and Rescue: CAUTION:**
There may be additional slides.
Check for injured and trapped persons near the slide area. Beware of unstable ground and structures, especially foundations and chimneys. Set up triage out of danger area.
- ◆ **Report:** Casualties, damage, utility disruptions. -DN

of the body and head if possible. Protect against the weather with a tent, inside a warm vehicle, or ambulance. Keep the victim's extremities down if possible, treat very gently, and get medical help as soon as possible.

- ◆ **IF CONSCIOUS AND ABLE TO DRINK:** Give warm, sweet drinks and food. Do not offer alcohol, massage, tobacco products, or physical exercise. If victim is fully conscious and shows no sign of heart problems, you can gently rewarm in a lukewarm bath. Be careful not to get the water too warm.
- ◆ **IF UNCONSCIOUS:** Call 911, manage the airway, and provide gentle transport to the hospital. Place the victim in the recovery position to prevent aspiration of vomit or drool. Keep extremities lower than body if possible. Move victim slowly, not allowing cold blood to envelop the heart all at once.

If you cannot get to a hospital soon, place the victim in a sleeping bag with another person to help warm them up. A hypothermic person's metabolism can slow so far their body heat has trouble regenerating.

- ◆ **REMEMBER:** If a person in a cold environment has red or blue skin, a body temperature of 95°F or less, is shivering and numb, and is not making sense, the patient could be hypothermic and need your care. Older and younger people in cold environments are more at risk. Tobacco and alcohol increase the risk of hypothermia. Always treat victims gently and get medical help soon.

Questions? E-mail Mary Lou Hadwick at MLH700@Juno.Com
Or mail to 4831 N. Maryland Ave, Portland, Or 97217.

Emergency Preparedness Division
Clark Regional Communications Agency
710 W. 13th Street
Vancouver, WA 98660-2810